

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method of organizing a plurality of digital images including at least one image placeholder in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program embodied in a computer media, said program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page layouts wherein any one of said plurality of images may be located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts are capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of images and said at least one image placeholder, wherein said plurality of images are not placed in said placeholder;

analyzing each of said different page layouts and spatially balancing said white space between said plurality of digital images and said at least one image placeholder in accordance with the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts; and

selecting the page layout based on the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images.

2. Cancelled.

3. Cancelled.

4 (Currently Amended) ~~A~~The method according to claim 1 wherein said analyzing said different page layouts comprises scoring each of said different page layouts.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of further scaling the plurality of digital images of said selected page layout by different amounts.

6. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim ~~3~~1 wherein the amount of white space is minimized by using stochastic algorithms.

7. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 1 wherein said grouping of said plurality of digital images includes placing said plurality of digital images in said different page layouts in a non-overlapping pattern.

8. Cancelled.

9. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 4 wherein said analyzing of said different page layouts comprises a iteration of comparing sequentially two different page layouts and selecting the best page layout until little or no further improvement in scoring is obtained.

10. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 9 further comprising the step of scaling individual images of the page layout obtained after said iteration.

11. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 9 further comprising the step of rotating said plurality of digital images a predetermined amount.

12. Cancelled.

13. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 1 further comprising the step of positioning said plurality of digital images in said selected page layout so as to provide a desired border on said page.

14. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim ~~12~~1 wherein said white space is determined vertically between adjacent images in said page layouts.

15. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A method according to claim ~~12~~  
1 wherein said white space is determined horizontally between adjacent images in  
said page layouts.

16. (Currently Amended) A method of organizing a plurality  
of digital images in a predetermined page format including a background image  
utilizing a software program embodied in a computer media, said program  
running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

identifying an image to be used as a background image;

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page  
layouts including said background image wherein any one of said plurality of  
images may be located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts,  
each of said page layouts are capable of being printed and having white space  
between said plurality of digital images;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with  
respect to the amount of said white space in each of said plurality of different  
page layouts and spatially balancing said white space between said plurality of  
digital images; and

selecting the page layout based on said amount of white space  
determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial  
balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~~~The~~ method according to Claim  
16 wherein said background image is displayed with at least one reduced  
characteristic.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A method according to Claim 17  
wherein said at least one reduced characteristic is color saturation.

19. (Currently Amended) ~~The~~A method according to Claim 17  
further including the step of:

identifying at least one image to be placed at a predetermined  
image location.

20. Cancelled.

21. Cancelled.

22. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 16 further comprising placing said plurality of digital images in said selected page layout.

23. Cancelled.

24. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 16 wherein said analyzing said different page layouts comprises scoring each of said different page layouts.

25. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 16 further comprising the step of further scaling the images of said selected page layout by different amounts.

26. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim ~~23~~ 16 wherein the amount of said space is minimized by using stochastic algorithms.

27. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 16 wherein said grouping of said plurality of digital images in said different page layouts is done in a non-overlapping pattern.

28. Cancelled.

29. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 16 wherein said analyzing of said different page layouts comprises a iteration of comparing sequentially two different page layouts and selecting the best page layout until little or no further improvement in scoring is obtained.

30. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 29 further comprising the step of scaling individual images of the page layout obtained after said iteration.

31. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 29 further comprising the step of rotating said images a predetermined amount.

32. Cancelled.

33. (Currently Amended) TheA method according to claim 16 further comprising the step of positioning said images in said selected page layout so as to provide a desired border on said page.

34. (Currently amended) TheA method according to claim ~~1623~~ wherein said white space is determined vertically between adjacent images in said page layouts.

35. (Currently amended) TheA method according to claim ~~1623~~ wherein said white space is determined horizontally between adjacent images in said page layouts.

36. (Currently amended) A computer software product for organizing a plurality of images in a predetermined format comprising a computer readable storage medium having a computer program wherein any one of said plurality of images may be located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts which when loaded into a computer causes the computer to perform the following steps:

grouping said plurality of images into a plurality of different page layouts; wherein said plurality of images are not placed in a predefined area on said page each of said page layouts are capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of said white space in each of said plurality of different

page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area; and

selecting the page layout based on said amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and the spatial balance of said white space between said plurality of digital images and said predefined area.

37. (Currently amended) A method of organizing a plurality of images in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program ~~wherein any one of said plurality of images may be located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts~~ running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

providing a plurality of digital images;

providing at least one image placeholder;

selecting a number of said images and said at least one image placeholder for placement on said predetermined format;

grouping said plurality of images and said image placeholder into a plurality of different page layouts each of said page layouts are capable of being printed and having white space between said plurality of digital images and said at least one image placeholder wherein any one of said plurality of images may be located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts r;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts; and

selecting the page layout based on the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of page layouts.

38. (Currently amended) A method of organizing a first set of plurality of images and an image placeholder in a predetermined page format utilizing a software program running on a computer, comprising the steps of:

grouping said plurality of images and said image placeholder into a plurality of different page layouts, wherein said plurality of images are not placed in said placeholder wherein any one of said plurality of images may be located in any position in said plurality of different page layouts, each of said page layouts capable of being printed;

analyzing each of said different page layouts in accordance with respect to the amount of white space in each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and image placeholder;

selecting the page layout based on said the amount of white space determined for each of said plurality of different page layouts and spatially balanced said white space between said plurality of digital images and

storing said selected page layout for later use.

39. (Currently amended) The~~A~~ method according to claim 38 wherein said stored page layout is used with a second plurality set of images.